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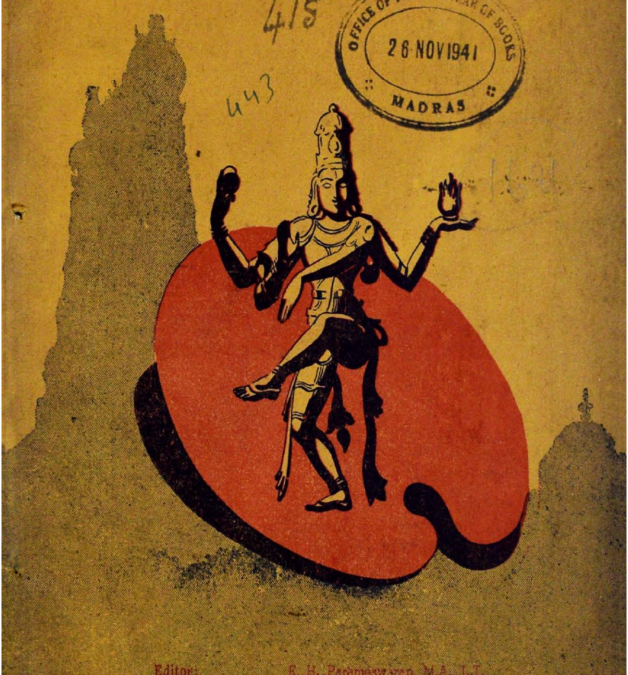

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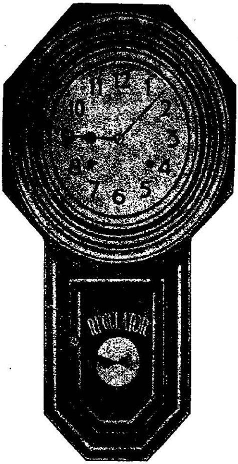

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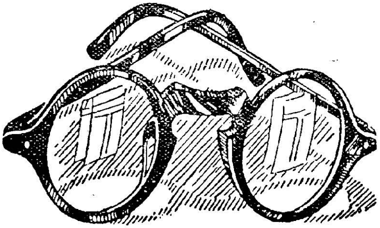

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Mysteries

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

ON the Karakorum Pass, at nineteen thousand five hundred feet — on this highway, the loftiest in the world, the groom Goorban began to question me:

"What is it that has been secreted in these heights? It must be that a great treasure has been hidden hereabouts, surely the way to this place is arduous. Having traversed all the passes, one may chance upon a smooth vault. Something tinkles under the horses' hoofs. It must be that here are great secrets, but the entry-way to them — we do not know. When will there be revealed writings in books, where and what has been secreted."

All around this majestic Karakorum Pass the white peaks glistened dazzlingly. All around us without a break was uplifted a most brilliant scintillation. On the path itself, as if for a reminder, were a great quantity of whitened bones. Were not some of these wayfarers going for treasures? Indeed, countless caravans have crossed the Karakorum for riches.

Here I am reminded about another tradition concerning treasure. In Italy, at Orvieto, they related to me a remarkable legend about secreted artistic treasures. The story concerned either Duccio himself or one of his contemporaries. It was told in a lofty style which goes so well with the mellifluous Italian language.

"Just as it is nowadays, in olden times the best artists were not always understood. To the beclouded eye it has been difficult to evaluate forms, particularly lofty ones. People have demanded only the observance of old rules, but often beauty has not been accessible to them. Thus it happened with the great artist about whom we are speaking. His best pictures, instead of exaltingly touching the hearts of people, were subjected to condemnations and mockery. For a long time the artist endured this unjust attitude toward himself.

"In divine ecstasy he continued to create many masterpieces.

"Once he depicted a very marvellous Madonna, but the envious prevented the hanging of this image in its predestined place. And this happened not once nor twice but several times. When the viper begins to creep in, it invades both palace and hovel.

"But the artist, made wiser and knowing the madness of the crowd, was not distressed. He said: 'It has been given the bird to sing, and to me have been given forces for glorifying lofty forms. As long as the bird lives it fills God's world with song. And so while I am alive, I shall also glorify it. Since the envious and the ignorant put obstacles in the way of my works, I shall not lead the evil into worse bitterness of heart. I shall collect the pictures rejected by them. I shall store them securely in oaken chests and, availing myself of the good-will of my friend the abbot, I shall hide them in the deep cellars of the monastery. When the ordained day shall come, future generations will discover them. If, then, by the will of the Creator they must remain in secret — let it be so!'

"No one knows in precisely what monastery, in what secret vaults the artist concealed his creations. True, in certain cloisters it has happened that old pictures have been found in crypts. But they have been found singly, they have not been purposefully deposited there and therefore could not belong to the treasure secreted by the great artist. Indeed in the underground vaults they continue to sing "Gloria in Excelsis", but the searchers have not been lucky enough to find what was indicated by the artist himself.

"Certainly we have many monasteries and still more temples and castles which lie in ruins. Who knows, perhaps the tradition relates to one of these remains, already destroyed and razed by time.

"From this time on, people thought that the great artist had ceased painting. But, hearing these suppositions, he only smiled, because henceforth he was not laboring for the sake of the people's joy but for a higher beauty. And so we do not know where this priceless treasure is preserved."

"But have you been assured that this treasure is hidden within the boundaries of Italy?"—asked one of the listeners. "Of course already in remote times people were going to other countries. May it not be that these treasures have likewise been unexpectedly dispersed or rather, preserved in different countries?" Another present added: "It may be this story does not at all refer to a single master. Of course human practices are often repeated. Consequently we find in history continual seeming repetitions of human wanderings and ascents."

The groom, Goorban, when we reached the middle of the Karakoram Pass, said to me: "Give me a couple of rupees. I will bury them here. Let us too add to the great treasure."

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I asked him: "Then do you think that treasures have been collected together there below?" He looked surprised, even frightened. "But does the sahib not know? Even to us lowly people it is known that there, deep down, are extensive underground vaults. In them have been gathered treasures from the beginning of the world. There are also great guardians. Some have been lucky enough to see how from the hidden entry-ways have issued tall white men, who then again withdrew underground. Sometimes they appear with torches and many caravaneers know these fires. These subterranean folks do no evil. They even help people.

"I know for a fact that one local boy lost his caravan in a snow-storm and covered over his head in despair. Then it seemed to him that someone was rummaging around him. He looked round, in the murk there appeared no horse, no man — he saw nothing. Yet when he put his hand in his pocket, he found there a handful of gold pieces. Thus do the great dwellers of the mountains help miserable people in misfortune."

And again the stories recurred to my mind about the secret magnets established by the followers of the great traveller Appolonius of Tyana. It was said that in definite places where it had been ordained that new states be built up or great cities erected, or where great discoveries and revelations should take place,— on all such sites were implanted portions of a giant meteor, sent from the distant luminaries.

There has even been a custom of testifying to the truth of statements by a reference to such ordained places. Deponents would say: "What I have said is as true as the fact that on a certain site has been placed such and such."

The groom Goorban again raised the question: "Why do you foreigners who know so much do not find the entry-way into the underground kingdom? You know how to do everything and boast of knowing everything and yet you do not enter into the secrets which are guarded by the great fire?"

**"Man lives in mysteries,
and these are numberless!"**

Buddha

Nothing comes here, nor is there any end
To this unbordered world, nor any way
To go or come, no wandering astray
O'er land and sea, no clouds, no night, no day
Nor any year.

No light of sun or moon nor any star,
But one deep Ray whose only source is here
And hidden in a blue and silver sphere
Of flames that beckon or restrain through fear
Of things unknown.

Life and the springs of Life are held in bounds
Of some strong circle never seen but known
Through all the steady, timeless glow and shown
By the great presence that calls on and on
To the Alone.

Here Silence is a word of matchless might
For who shall fight or stand against the Power
That can give battle not for one brief hour
But for all time, arise! these flames are our
Eternal eyes.

—*Barnett. D. Conlan*

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Gopi's Love for Krishna

By SWAMI SIVANANDA

SOME ignorant people say: "Krishna is not the Lord. He is not an avatar. He is a passionate cowherd who lustfully played with the Gopis." What was the age of Lord Krishna at that Time? Was he not a boy of seven? Can there be a tinge of passion in Him? Who can understand the secret of Rasalila and Madhurya Bhav, the culmination of highest Bhakti, Atmanivedan or total surrender to the Lord. It is only Narada, Suka Deva, Chaitanya, Mira, Hafiz, Ramananda, The Sakhis or Gopis that could understand the secret of Rasalila. The Sakhis are only qualified for this. Did he not play miracles when he was a boy? Did he not show that he was an Avatar of Lord Hari? Did he not show Viratdarsan to his mother when he was a baby? Did he not kill the Kaliya serpent by standing on its hood? Did he not multiply as countless Krishnas? Who were the Gopis? Were they not God-intoxicated beings who saw Krishna alone everywhere, who saw themselves also as Krishna? The sound of the Murali could throw them in a state of divine Ecstasy or holy communion. They were above body consciousness.

Lord Krishna snatched away the clothes and rendered them nude. There is a great philosopny in this. He taught them: "O Gopis! Have no attachment for anything. Give up the body idea and sex-idea and attain to the body-less sex-less Immortal Atma."

The Gopis of Brindaban were wonderful devotees of Lord Krishna. They totally surrendered themselves unto the Lord. The Gopis who are Devas got blended with Krishna through their intense love. The love they bore towards Krishna was a divine love. Lord Krishna played on his flute on a moonlit night. The Gopis rushed forth immediately to where their lover was. Their minds were absorbed in Krishna. They forgot everything when they heard the flute.

Some left their houses while milking the cow. Some left their houses when they were serving their husbands with food. Some did not take down the boiled rice from the fire. Some did not wait till the milk got boiled. Some had been giving milk to their children. Some were taking food. Some were serving the guests with food. But they all left their work half-finished. Their clothes, hair and ornaments were all in disorder. They ran to behold Sri Krishna. Lord Krishna was their very prana and soul. They could not bear his separation even for a second. How devoted the Gopis were! Can you imagine? It is beyond all imagination.

When Lord Krishna suddenly disappeared they roamed from forest to forest. They asked the trees if they had seen their lover. They enquired of the creepers, the earth and the deer. They imitated his actions and even called themselves Krishna. All their thoughts were directed towards Krishna. They conversed about him only. They sang all about his deeds only. They were full of Krishna. They were immersed in his love. They had no other thoughts. They had no other aspirations. They did not think of their homes or relatives. They went to the banks of Jamuna and sang in chorus about Krishna and prayed fervently for his return.

Pleased with their devotion Lord Krishna suddenly appeared before them and addressed them thus:—

"Welcome, ye great ones! What good can I do for you? Is it all safe in Vraja? Tell me the object of your coming here. The night is fearful and dangerous animals are treading round. Go back to Vraja. This is not a place for women. You have got your mothers, fathers, sons, brothers and husbands. They are seeking you. Do not cause pain to your friends. What more, you have now seen this forest adorned with flowers and illumined by the tender rays of the full moon, where the trees and their tender branches gently moved by the breeze from the Yamuna, stand in all their beauty. Now go back, O virtuous girls! speedily to your homes and look after your husbands. The calves and your children are weeping. Go and let them have their milk. Or if you have come here forced by your love for me, it is only meet and proper, for all people have their love for me. Devotion to husband is the one great religion for women. They are to seek the well-being of their friends and to bring up their children. The husband may be wicked, old, diseased or poor. But those who wish for higher Lokas should not give up their husbands. The connection with one who is not the husband is disreputable and unbecoming. You may bear love for me in other ways than by such a near approach. Therefore go back to your houses."

The Gopies were struck dumb for a time. They became overcome with sorrow. They had given up everything for the sake of Krishna and they could ill-bear to hear these unkind words. At last they broke forth: "O Lord it is not for thee to utter these unkind words. We have given up all objects and sought thy feet. O thou difficult to be reached, do not forsake us but please think of us, even as the first Purusha think of those that seek Moksha. Thou speakest, O Love, of our duties to husbands, sons and friends as if thou were a religious teacher, but thou art thyself the goal of those religious injunctions. So let them rest in thee. Thou art the greatest friend of all beings. For thou art verily their own self, what do they care for husbands or sons, sources of misery as they are, who are attached to thee; the constant

source of happiness? In these words the Gopis expressed their deepest affection for Lord Krishna. We find in the Gopis complete self-surrender (Atma-Nivedan) in its true sense. They cared not even for their lives. How could they care then their relatives, friends and cattle?

If you want to attain Krishna you must serve him as a Gopi. You must adore him with the mental attitude of a Gopi. The devotee who worships Krishna with a Gopi Bhav enjoys the Madhurya Ras.

Lord Krishna who incarnated for the sake of eradicating evil and protecting the righteousness could not be associated with the sexual instinct or passion towards the Gopis. He is the slave of his devotees.

Through Bhakti alone we can obtain the grace of the Lord, and cross the ocean of Samsara. Let us now sing Lord Krishna's name "Om Sri Krishna Govinda Hare Murare He Natha Narayana Vasudeva" Let us ever remember the mantra of Bhagavat which can confer us supreme peace and eternal bliss:— OM Krishnaya Vasudevaya Haraye Paramatmane Pranatha Klesanaya Govindaye Namo Namah" Prostrations to thee O Hari, the Supreme Lord, O Govinda, Krishna the son of Vasudeva (the inner ruler of all), who removes the afflictions of those who prostrate unto thee.

Glory to Bhagavata, Glory to Vyasa, Glory to Bhagavatas, Glory to Lord Krishna! May the blessings of Lord Krishna and the Bhagavatas be upon you all!

OM SANTI! SANTI! SANTI!

Indian Classical Dances

By S. V. VENUGOPAL

DANCING pursued as an art, exercise or pastime is healthful, grace giving, beautifying and refining. Individual dances and styles of performing them may have a certain vogue but dancing itself does not go out of fashion. The attitudes of the figures in antique sculpture are taken into account as being worthy of imitation, as well as their proportion and symmetry. We shall presently consider what positions of body and limbs are by universal consent pronounced graceful and analyse these positions and undulations, serpentine movements and the play of eyes. I have noticed in my wanderings in quest of a study of this great art, that many dancers fail to understand the innate meaning and the significance of the dances they perform. Dance must be able to portray the legend or epic to the spectators. The rules of Natya compared with the changing times would seem to be almost eternal and are precisely the same in many respects to-day as they were thousand years ago. Else, why do we continue to study them from famous sculptures of old? We have noticed in most of the South Indian temples the freedom with which graceful postures are depicted to convey some meaning. The lovely and familiar statuettes of Nataraja and Siva are outstanding examples.

Bhasa, Sage Bharata, Poet Kalidasa and a host of others laid the foundations of this great art. Numerous Karanas—poses described by Bharata Muni, the authority on Natya Sastra, are sculptured on the great *gopurams* of the Chidambaram Temple. The symbolic significance of this Dance is rich and powerful. The three classic dramas —Malavika, Urvashi and Sakuntala—are familiar to most of us. Bhasa had shown Hallishaka dance—a kind of circular dance developed into a small drama. Tradition requires the artists to know the fundamentals of higher dance.

Words end in poetry, poetry in music and music in the delicate and mute rythm of the gestures of dancing. 'Lasya' is a dance in which the emotions of love are depicted in various gestures, and 'Thandava' is the violent type of dance of Siva.

There are three kinds of dances in India, the South Indian Dance, the Menipuri and the North Indian Dance. The South Indian Dance is very ancient and expresses six kinds of emotions—Rasas which represent feeling, friendship, love, strength, heroism and honour. These are mirrored by good figures, rythm and expression. The different movements and poses represent the language of Dance. The movements or *mudras*, as they are called, are based on the classics,

Mahabharata and Ramayana. Kathakali, the dance drama of Kerala, appeals to religion and its themes are epic and all Indian. The make-ups in Kathakali are founded or based upon the ancient sculptures of the gods seen in the images and paintings in temples. Men of noble character like Rama and Krishna and the Pandavas have their faces

Ram Gopal, the Temple Dancer in a dance pose.

painted green with white border for relief. Persons of worldly power and might have white curves on green paints and knobs on nose and foreheads. Men of cruel character have red or black paints for faces with knobs and curves galore. All these characters have

brilliant crowns consisting of round disc mounted on a hollow comb. Characters like Hanuman and Garuda have special make-ups.

Bharatanatya is another form of South Indian art with a great origin. Every movement and gesture signifies spiritual expression and the dance cannot be moved or lowered below a certain standard. Every detail of form and movement is perfect in technique. Sound knowledge of music is imperative. Herein power of dramatic expression is displayed by the body and particularly the face as distinct from North Indian Dance. Bharatanatya has three aspects Natya, Nritya and Nritta. In Natya the dancer is supported by many actors and stage appointments as in a drama. In Nritya, the dancer portrays the transcendental emotions of the Divine ones thus arousing the highest elements of pure devotion in the minds of those who witness the dance. Nritta is the cosmic aspect of Bharatanatya. Its essence is pure tala or rhythm. In the technique of Bharatanatya, Srimathi Rukmini Arundale has attained unparalleled eminence. Her art is unique. Her presentation is not only interpretative but creative. The Abhinaya part of her dance is well known for its purity, precision and lucidity.

In North India, Kathak dance is prevalent. Prominence is given to the rhythm of the feet neglecting rythmical and emotional expressions. Mention may be made of that famous Temple Dancer Ram Gopal whose able exposition of Kathak art is wellknown for perfection of movements and footwork. The rich and many-sided varieties of movements and gestures doubtless invest his art with an individuality that defies comparison and defeats imitation. Ram Gopal is one of the cleverest of Indian artists. His control of rhythm is well nigh perfect and his mastery of footwork is a little short of miraculous. His gestures are superb, and presentations vivid and life like.

Manipuri Dancing retains an individuality of its own which is different from other schools of Dancing. Intricacies of technique and timing do not predominate here as in Kathak Dancing. Manipur is a stronghold of vaishnavism. Every temple has a dance hall in thatched shed or open hall. The hall is the venue for musical soirees or dancing. These songs arouse such a deep response in staunch vaishnavites that they burst into tears. The devotional singing creates a proper atmosphere. Ras Leela and Hara Parvahti and Naga Dance are well known in manipuri school. The predominence of *bakthi rasa* accounts for the characteristic feature of this kind of art.

Art has found a self light and is yet in a transitory stage. Costumes and backgrounds have to be modelled with care for a successful and effective dance. Dance is meant to express and portray life and therefore the sway of the body and movement of limbs and

expression of eyes have a certain importsnt significiance. Every little pose is governed by rigid rules laid down by the great pioneers of Natya in Ancient India. It is a matter of pride that famous artists like Uday Shankar, Ram Gopal, Menaka and Rukmani Devi are engaged in the reorientation of this unique art of India It is hoped that artistic renaissance now in vogue will come forth to revive Indian Dancing in all its prestine glory.

The Rosary

You walk upon the earth as one decended from the car
Apollo's once but now the Sun—and in your hand a star.
For in your perfect form unite divided hemispheres
The joy of day, the bliss of night;
All raptures and all tears.
These words of love I tell them o'er
As monk his rosary :
We know the visions we adore
Are bright reality.

—Grant Duff, M. A. (Oxon.)

Reform of The Tamil Script

By S. R. VENKATARAMAN

THE cultural revival we are witnessing in Tamil nad today and the necessity in modern times to make Tamil a vehicle for all forms of expression and modes of thought, the urgent need to reduce and simplify the existing numerous Tamil characters thus making it easy for the adult and the child to learn the language as quickly as possible and without much strain, the desirability of adding a few more letters to the Tamil language to represent certain sounds that do not exist now, and the demands of the printing trade and the type-writer, all these clamour for an urgent reform of the Tamil script.

In any proposal for the reform of the Tamil script it is necessary to bear in mind two principles: first, the reforms must be made once and for all and there should be no piece-meal reform necessitating another reform some years later. This is important from the point of view of writers and publishers; second, any reform that may be proposed should not be too revolutionary and make the learning of the language more difficult than what it is now; as a matter of fact it must be made easier. In my proposal for the reform of the Tamil script I have been guided throughout by these two considerations. The Tamil language now consists of 313 letters as shown below:

Vowels	...	12
Consonants	...	18
Vowel-Consonants 12 x 18	...	216
Granth letters	...	5
Grantha-vowel consonants 12 x 5		60
Auyutham	...	1
Sri	...	1
	Total	313

Though we have 313 letters in the Tamil language, we have no letters to produce the dirghas, ga, dha, ba and da. We cannot also produce the English sounds of F and Z. Out of 313 letters, an adult or a child who desires to learn Tamil has to learn to write 88 basic letters as shown below:

Vowles	12
Consonants	18
Auyutham	1
Vowel-signs	6
Vowel consonants such as (ணா. றா. னா. ணை. லை. ளை. னை.)	7
Total	44

B. F.	44
Wu & Woo vowel combinations of the 18 consonants written separately	36
5 grantha characters (ஜ. ஷ. ஸ. ஹ. க்ஷ)	5
Wu & Woo vowel signs for the Grantha characters	2
Grantha letter Sri	1
Total	88

Even these 88 letters are too many though the Tamil language contains fewer letters than most Indian languages. It is my suspicion that the low percentage of literacy in India is due to the numerous letters we have in the Indian languages. The European languages, even as the English language, I have it on good authority have fewer letters than the Indian languages and that is probably the reason for the higher percentage of literacy in the West.

There are three aspects to the reform of a Tamil script. First is *pruning* of the supernumerary letters; second, the adoption of a uniform system of placing the vowel signs instead of the present practice of placing some vowel signs before and some after the consonants. I call this the re-arranging the vowel symbols. Third is grafting, that is adding a few more letters to produce those sounds for which there are no letters now in the Tamil language. Let me first deal with pruning.

There are five short vowels and seven long vowels, including the letter Ai (ஐ) and Ou (ஔ). In my view all the long vowels may be dropped completely and by adding the long A (ா) vowel sign to the short vowels get the long vowels.

Take the vowel signs we use in connection with consonants. In the case of some letters we use a few basic independent vowel signs and in the case of a few letters the vowel signs form part of the letter as in ணா, றா, னா, ணை, ளை, லை, னை. These could be avoided if we use uniform basic vowel signs in their case also. There is again no need for writing Kai as கை or Kau as கௌ but these can be written thus without altering the sound effect of the letters :— கய் and கவ்

There are again certain sounds in Tamil which could be produced only by the combination of three letters. They could be reduced to two without affecting the language in any manner whatsoever. Take the sound Ko and *Ko* (கொ, கோ) We have to use three letters. So also in the case of other consonants. This could be avoided by adopting a distinct vowel symbol for both the sounds. Thus no sound in Tamil will require more than two letters.

The placing of vowel signs should be uniform. This is to facilitate the child and the adult to learn the language without much effort. I suggest that as a general principle all the vowel symbols when used in combination with consonants be placed after the consonants as in Ka, க + ஆ = கா.

We now come to the question of *grafting*. The need for this reform is now more acutely felt than before as the non-language subjects in High school classes are taught in the boys' own mother tongue. Boys studying in the second and third forms read names of persons and places occuring in their text books in a manner that makes one sad. Lord Ripon when written in Tamil is read by the boy as Lord Ribbon.

The word 'Tory' is read as 'Dory'. Instances like these may be multiplied and any teacher with keen ears will be able to give many more such instances. Therefore, the need for adding letters to denote the sounds of Ga as in Gódavari, Dha as in Dharmapuram, Ba as in Belur, Da as in Dornakal, F as in France, Franc, Ferdinand and Francis and Z as in Zanzibar, Zetland and New Zealand and similar words is very great. It will result in the enrichment of the Tamil language.

In attempting to grfat these sounds into the Tamil language it is necessary that the new letters representing them should approximate in shape and association to letters of the same sound genus in Tamil language. This again is to avoid any difficulty that learners may feel.

This matter has to be approached in a broad spirit and with an open mind and the reform that may be effected should be such as to avoid any revolutionary change or vital alteration so far as the Tamil language and the literature is concerned. If these reforms infringe rules of Tamil grammar, I suggest that they must be looked into and where the reform is absolutely necessary, the rules of grammar may be so modified as to meet the needs of the situation.

According to these proposals an adult or a child will have to learn the following:

Vowels	5
Vowel Symbols	9
Consonants	18
Grantha character	6
New letters added	6
Total	44

It will be seen from the above that after adding 6 more letters to the Tamil script the total number of basic letters has been reduced from 88 to 44 a reduction of 50 per cent.

The Discovery

By J. DANIEL, B. A., L. T.

JEROME was twenty five when the irresistible dreams of youth began to haunt him with a persistence that pleasantly thrilled him. When therefore Miriam, a buxom maid of the neighbourhood smiled at him with a free frank face, his heart most naturally and freely leaped up to meet hers and his answering smile was but a token of complete surrender. From that moment he knew without a shadow of doubt that he was a captive of her heart.

During those days of sweet dreams, he had no eyes, no thought, no heart for any other than her smiling charms, her ringing laughter and her sparkling eyes. Basking in the roseate light of fancy's dreams, he saw in her the ideal of his heart—her face seemed an angel's, her laughter a music, her every word a caress and her touch electric. When his lips touched hers in the silvery light of a full moon night, that first kiss was to him more sacred than any wedlock symbol. The radiant moon was the priest and the twinkling stars the witness. As the man and maid looked up towards the heavens, Miriam laughed first with a silvery tingle and then as if half shy of the moon that smiled on them, she quickly veiled her face with her light saree hiding it from the moon that looked on with a calm but searching look and from the stars that sparkled with mischievous eyes.

No wonder that their love pined for wedded bliss. But the parents were a problem and Jerome knew that the sweetness of wedlock could only be his though a painful sacrifice. His beloved mother's heart might possibly break. His mother's or his love's—a terribly bitter choice !

The sun seemed particularly hot on the day when Jerome married Miriam. It was freely spoken about that Jerome himself could hardly refrain from being choked with sobs of agony. Those who looked into his eyes saw it brimming with tears. It was clear to one and all that Jerome was struggling with all his force of will to check the tears that would betray his secret agony. But when Miriam looked into his eyes with her frank smile that had captivated his heart, his tears sank back and his clouded face was wreathed once more in smiles.

Then followed a week of bliss—a foretaste of Heaven indeed ! for what is Heaven but a place where the cup of love overflows. But how true it is that earth is not Heaven ! The angel of Heavenly bliss but finds a temporary halt here and there on earth, sufficiently low enough

perhaps to tickle human hearts to pine for that which cannot be had on earth !

Jerome's mother was still deeply sore with the wounds her son had so thoughtlessly inflicted. Jerome was still her son ; but Miriam was the target of all her scorn and hatred. Haunted by his mother's face Jerome went off into moods of depression and Miriam could not understand him. Her buoyant spirits too gradually lost their vivacity, oppressed by the melancholic atmosphere around. Each saw the other's love cool off gradually and with a gnawing sense of pain felt the cup of joy slipping away from their lips. Poor deer ones ! Neither knew the other's heart while each blamed silently the other.

Jerome, trying to escape from the threatening disaster of a possible wreckage, found his refuge in art and took to painting landscapes and human faces. Miriam on the other hand found livelier interests, more in keeping with her vivacious temperament. But through it all, their hearts were pining for love, each painfully ignorant of the other's hidden craving. Jerome's depression was but an expression of heart's hunger for love while Miriam's other interests were only the outward symptoms of a revolt against her husband's passivity.

Sometimes Miriam would wonder what it was that held Jerome to the dingy studio. It seemed an altogether crazy affair. The door of his studio was ever closed, and hidden from other's prying eyes he gave free play to his imagination. Day in and day out he worked on and no one knew what he was at.

Miriam indeed had several fits of curiosity that nearly drove her to question him about it but her pride would not allow her to do it. The urge of curiosity is however a force that cannot be repelled for all time and it was therefore not long before Miriam's curiosity got the better of her. She silently stepped near the door and peeped to see what he was at. What was her shock to see a maiden form of rare beauty stretched out on the easel ! Whose form it was, she could not see. Incensed with fury she knocked violently keeping her eyes still on the keyhole. What she saw, was enough to make her mad. With a bright smile, Jerome neared the easel and kissed the maiden form painted on the canvas full on her lips while all the while Miriam stood outside frantically kicking at the door. Jerome seemed to be unusually calm as he removed the picture from the easel and tucked it away in a corner where he thought Miriam's eyes could never stray. On the easel he stretched out another sheet of unfinished painting—a landscape of a crystal stream and of rich green fields.

He fully believed he had covered his tracks well enough before he opened the door and so was not at all prepared for the sudden rush of Miriam to the forbidden spot where he had hid his treasured

picture. With a red hot face and shivering frame she unrolled the picture with the trembling fear of finding in it the cause of all her woes.

And what was it she saw! It was her own self as she stood on the moon light night years ago when his lips met her's under the quiet stars. The form was perfect in every detail with the same saree and blouse she had worn that night when life was a heaven to her. It was the Miriam of the golden moonlight days when her eyes sparkled love and her lips parted in sweet smile of irresistible charm. What a veritable fool she had been! Her eyes filled with tears as she let slip the piece of canvas—that pledge of true devotion, and passionate love. As if pulled by an irresistible magnetic force she stretched out her arms towards him and twined them round the one who had loved her through sorrow and through joy, through darkness and through light. Was it a curtain from heaven that dropped at this stage hiding the lovers from mortal eyes, for their happiness was such as could be tasted only there!

The Soil: All Things to All Men

By HARRY M. DAVIS

"BACK to the soil"- to the scientist that familiar slogan has just gained a new meaning. Bacteriologists, battlers against the microscopic enemies of humanity, have literally gone from the laboratory back to the soil for new weapons. From the rich, fresh loam of garden and field they are beginning to extract powerful microbe-killing microbes as allies in their war on many human diseases.

This news, when first announced at scientific meetings, seemed startling. Yet essentially it should not be surprising. "Dust thou art, to dust returnest"—we know how literally that is true of everything that lives upon the land. Whether vegetable or animal, its tissue reverts in death to the mineral. The decomposition is the work of microscopic bacteria within the soil. Now certain breeds of those bacteria are being taken out of the soil and nurtured in the laboratory to the task of attacking the bacteria of human infections.

Here is a new significance for the powdery layer beneath our feet. And that significance raises afresh those questions that every one has pondered who ever watched the perennial miracle of green sprouts emerging from the earth. What is this stuff called soil? How was it formed? What goes on within it to make it so intimate a part of the cycle of human life? And why, in recent months, have scientists been inspired to pack dirty earth into their shining, sterile laboratory glass-ware as part of the effort to better human health?

The soil is all things to all men. The dirt farmer stoops to pick up a lump of it - black, brown, reddish or yellow—and lets it fall through grimy fingers. It is good, rich soil and provides a living; or it is a poor soil that eats up its produce in fertilizer and sweat.

The laboratory worker places a weighed quantity of soil in a flask, shakes it up with so much water, allows forty seconds for the coarse particles of sand to settle to the bottom and an hour for the smaller particles of silt to separate, then takes the remaining brown suspension to a whirling centrifuge that deposits out the fine colloidal clay. Thus he can report that different soils contain different proportions of larger and smaller particles, each with a varying content of mineral and organic matter.

The geologist looks with X-ray eyes through the earth's top layer and beholds what to him is much more important—the firm foundation of rock underneath, the rock that forms the continents and underlies the oceans. The soil, he tells us, is merely the life-flavored debris

of the rock's disintegration. It is worth going along for a while with the geologist, for his is the long-range viewpoint and his are the theories of how soil came into being in the first place.

Imagine, the geologist says, the earth as it was before it gained its modest mantle of soil. There was such a time, he insists, a billion or more years ago. This globular planet was but newly fused out of hot fragments pulled by some cosmic encounter out of the sun. The outer layers of molten rock had solidified into a crust. In the crust's depressions the steaming vapour from the atmosphere had condensed to form the oceans. The high areas projected as the continents – bare glassy rock, it is believed, much like the lava flows that are brought up in modern times from the earth's hot depths by volcanoes.

How did this hard primordial rock develop its covering of life-supporting soil? For an answer geologists point to processes that can be observed at work on rock outcroppings today. Heat of sunshine expands rock, the cold of night contracts it. Engineers provide their concrete structures with expansion joints—prearranged cracks to take up the strain. Rocks, not so ingeniously designed by nature, yield to the strain in cracks.

Then comes rain. It seeps into the fissures, washing out the minerals that dissolve. Ice gets into the cracks in the Winter, expanding irresistibly and further breaking up the rock. Wind, glaciers, avalanches and rivers pound the hard material until it is reduced to particles of gravel, sand, silt or clay.

But that is only soil material—it is not yet soil. It takes living matter and its decaying residues, mingled, with the rocky particles, to make a genuine soil. From observations on volcanic lava flows—the nearest thing now on earth to the primordial rocks—it has been guessed that life gained its first foothold on the land through the green mosses and varicolored lichens. These early settlers can perform on bare rock their function of extracting energy from sunlight and material from air and water to incorporate into their own living tissue.

The death of these soil pioneers constitutes an open invitation to bacteria to gorge upon the remains—and it is a truism of nature that where food exists, that form of life which is capable of consuming it will somehow make its appearance. Somehow, from the sea or from the air, the appropriate bacteria—microscopic creatures of a single round or rod-shaped cell—appear in the overgrown rock material. Eating and decomposing the lichens and mosses, they leave a host of organic chemical compounds in the developing soil. On these the seeds of higher plants can—and therefore do—begin to sprout. Grasses grow, their roots further breaking and enriching the soil

material. Flowering plants, shrubs and fruitful trees may follow—deepening on the climate—and always contributing their own dead matter to the soil.

By such processes, at a rate of perhaps thousands of years to the inch, the soil has come into being. The process is reversible—soil is often packed down again into solid rock—and so the amount of available soil on this planet is not so great at only eight feet -- the merest gossamer veil upon this 8,000-mile-thick planet of ours. And of that thin film only the uppermost part, the six or eight inches that correspond roughly to a plow's furrow, constitutes the "topsoil" that is man's most indispensable resource.

Here, in the layer ventilated by life-supporting air and penetrated by the roots of vegetation, exists an intricate complex of organisms, plant and animal, visible to the naked eye and invisible. Here there are competition, unconscious co-operation and mutual destruction in a relationship that has taken eons of evolution to bring into balance.

The soil teems with crawling and wriggling creatures of every kind. There are mites and ticks, slugs and snails, centipedes, spiders, ants. Everywhere are the blind earthworms, feeding upon the soil and serving in turn as food for burrowing, gray-furred moles. Worms are regarded as important soil-improving agents, for in their incessant turning they mix the organically rich matter at the surface with the minerals beneath.

Far more important than these obvious inhabitants of the soil are the microscopic creatures whose role was hardly guessed until the rise of bacteriological research in the last century. Men like Pasteur and Koch, best known for their proof that microscopic organisms caused disease in the human body, also helped demonstrate that other micro-organisms in the soil performed a multitude of beneficial duties.

Cultivated in tilted test tubes, in bottles and glass dishes, microbes from out of the dirt revealed remarkable chemical abilities. Some strains could decompose dead leaves, others dead flesh, into such basic ingredients as ammonia and carbon dioxide gas Still others could take nitrogen gas from the air and synthesize it into nitrates.

Without these performances by bacteria, the cycle of land life as we know it could not go on. Growth would continuously drain the soil of its richness. Dead plant and animal remains would cover the land, undecomposed, the constituents of life locked unavailably within them. New growth can go on as it does only because bacteria break down the dead tissue, restoring its elements to circulation. Even bacteria themselves are subject to the universal process of liquidation—by other bacteria. Without the scavenging and synthesizing

work of these rudimentary inhabitants of the soil the higher forms of life, including man, could hardly have emerged.

In recent decades, as man has become conscious of the essential role of bacteria, he has also harnessed some of them to special tasks. Removed from their "wild" habitat in the soil or in the air, pure strains of "domesticated" micro-organisms are cultivated in the laboratory and put to work. Beer brewers and bread bakers swear by their special breeds of living yeast; cheeses are given their flavour by particular molds; nitrogen-fixing bacteria are sold to farmers, who use them to inoculate their alfalfa so that it will enrich the soil with nitrates.

The most dramatic imaginable use for microbes from the soil now seems possible—as antagonists to microbes that infect human flesh. The principle is readily understandable. Insects prey upon other insects. Why not find "good" microbes that would prey upon the germs of human disease?

Here was a challenge both to medicine and to soil science. Three separate researches are pushing ahead with the work. At the hospital of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York City Dr. Rene J. Dubos has worked for ten years on the problem, and for his contribution he received the John Phillips Memorial Award for 1940, one of medicine's highest honors. At the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station in New Brunswick, where the late Dean Jacob Lipman founded one of the nation's pioneering laboratories of soil microbiology, the work has been furthered by Dr. Selman A. Waksman and Dr. H. Boyd Woodruff. At the Biochemical Research Foundation of the Franklin Institute in Newark, Del., Dr. J. C. Hoogerheide has contributed important discoveries.

Nothing organic accumulates in nature—if it did, it would soon fill the earth. Living organisms and organic substances, including bacteria, are eventually detroyed, and the destroyer is usually some special form of bacteria which lives for that very purpose. Hence given enough time, patience and skill, the bacteriologist should be able to find microbes capable of decomposing any kind of organic substance and killing any kind of bacteria.

But looking for the appropriate germ-killer was like looking for a particular kind of needle in a haystack full of needles—for the soil is full of bacteria of many kinds, billions and billions to the handful, and there is little to tell them apart under the most powerful microscope. The method that Dr. Dubos used seems, in retrospect, quite simple. The disease germ to be destroyed was offered as bait—and the antagonist among the many bacteria in the soil was encouraged to volunteer.

To do this Dr. Dubos placed some moist, rich soil in a jar and added some germs of, for example, pneumonia. He allowed time for any available consumer of those germs to grow in numbers at their expense. Then he transferred a bit of the infected soil to a flask containing a pure pneumonia culture. On this anything but a pneumococcus antagonist would starve. By successive transfers he at last isolated a pure strain of rod shaped bacteria, about a ten-thousandth of an inch in length. These were the long-sought slayers of the deadly pneumococcus. Under the microscope they could be seen in growing numbers, about ten times as long as the tiny spherical pneumonia germs that they had killed and upon whose dissolved constituents they were feeding.

By this and similar procedures, "antagonists" have been isolated from the soil during the last few months for virtually all types of bacteria that infect human flesh. Dr. Dubos has gone farther and has separated from these soil bacteria a chemical extract that is deadly to a large group of disease germs—the pneumococci of pneumonia, the streptococci of blood poisoning and the staphylococci that cause boils. This extract is now being manufactured by pharmaceutical companies for experimental use.

Recently from several different strains of soil bacteria Dr Hoogerheide isolated an extract that kills pneumococci and other germs of the same group as that affected by Dr. Dubos's agent. Dr. Hoogerheide's extract has protected white mice against pneumonia and anthrax germs and it has been used by Dr. V. Murray Wright of Philadelphia in dressing badly infected surface wounds on humans with "very promising results."

By such work doctors are trying to determine whether these new substances can safely be used as medicine against human ills. If the results are successful, it will mean a powerful addition to the arsenal of healing. And men will acknowledge another debt to the soil from which they have sprung. —*The New York Times.*

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Fundamentals of Education.*

BY PROF. A. RAMA IYER, M. A.

WE are now passing through a most critical phase in the history of man. The outlook for the future of modern civilization is as dark as dark can be. Civilized man has unashamedly relapsed into primitive barbarism. The paean of hate is to-day resounding through the wide world, and it seems a mockery to think in terms of 'peace on earth and goodwill towards men.' It would indeed be a tragedy if all this shook our faith in the ultimate destiny of Man. We must not withhold our admiration from those who are passing through the fire of unimaginable sufferings and sacrifices in their heroic effort to stem the tide of aggression and re-establish the reign of justice and freedom on earth. We should, indeed, be false to all that is noblest in the traditions of our race if we let our vision be dimmed by the hideous miasma of hatred and destruction threatening to envelop all space.

In these dark days, more than ever, we have to realise the need for education of the right type. True education alone can exercise the demons of inertia and doubt, of suspicion and ill will, and make the world a fit place for civilised man. And this is as true of our own country as of any other. The need for more education of the right type in our country is brought home to us by the rising tide of mutual suspicion and hatred, and the deliberate efforts of so-called leaders to accentuate the elements of discord and disharmony. Nothing perhaps is so strikingly calculated to demonstrate the failure of our education as the ease with which our 'educated' men are able to persuade themselves that our salvation lies in fratricidal warfare.

Judged by its achievement on the educational side, our government must be pronounced to have dismally failed to awake to a sense of its responsibility. Taking elementary education alone, we are practically no nearer the goal of universal compulsory education than we were when the late Mr. Gokhale raised the question more than thirty years ago. For a time it seemed as if we were about to reach

*** From the Presidential Address of the 32nd Provincial Educational Conference held in Rishi Valley on May 15.**

the goal by introduction of the Wardha Scheme of Basic education. The Congress Government of our Province (however half-heartedly) had made a beginning in this direction by the opening of two Training Schools, one at Coimbatore, the other at Masulipatam. At the end of the year, these schools were closed down, and all the spade-work done has gone to naught. The pretext has all along been want of funds; but when Mahatma Gandhi came out with his craft-centred scheme of education which, along with its many other good points, had the supreme merit, from the government's point of view, of being nearly self-supporting, except for the initial outlay, the government would not give it even a fair trial, in spite of its acknowledged success wherever it has been tried. At the present rate of progress, the goal of universal mass education is not likely to be reached at a modest calculation, in less than a century! What more powerful indictment of a modern government could we think of than this,—that, after a century of educational effort, no less than 90 per cent. of the population is still illiterate, and that, instead of accelerating the pace, the government are actually doing their best to retard it still further! The recent Elementary Education (Amendment) Bill, unabashedly disclaims the responsibility of the State even for primary education. In Malabar we have the spectacle of 150 Board Elementary Schools summarily closed down by the orders of the government. Educational grants to private institutions have been heavily cut down, where they have not been altogether stopped. It was only the other day that the President of the Madras Library Association was bitterly complaining of the government's attitude towards the Library Movement; the government have no money for libraries at all, as if reading and the acquisition of knowledge were an impertinence in our country! In no direction have the government shown signs of a progressive educational policy or the glimmerings of a realization that education is the soundest form of national investment.

Let us now consider some of the fundamental requirements of a sound system of education. "It is the tremendous task and privilege of education to pave the way for the feet of the next generation and guide them into the way of peace." No education, therefore, is worth the name that is not idealistic in its aims and based on an irrepressible faith in human nature. No one can be a good educator who is not an idealist—a practical idealist, if you like, but one in whom idealism is the dominant motive. The business of education is the development of the individuality or personality of the child, not moulding him to a pattern as in the totalitarian states. The distinctive individuality of each child can develop only in an atmosphere of freedom and joy. Freedom does not mean a negation of discipline, but discipline tempered by love, discipline to the extent of controlling and directing the energies of the individual child along the most life-giving channels.

The stream has to be dammed in order that it may provide energy for man's use instead of going to waste. All-round efficiency of the individual must be the aim of education,—what has been called 'the *literacy* of the whole man.'

First, of course, must come the eradication of *physical illiteracy* Mr. L. P. Jacks in an address to teachers, has laid great stress on this aspect of education as the foundation of everything. He quotes the testimony of the headmaster of a large elementary school in London to the effect that not more than 5 per cent of the children in his school knew how to stand, to sit, to walk, to run, to speak, or to breathe. Even boys who may not be undersized or unhealthy may be physical illiterates. 'Their bodies may be untrained and undisciplined in the management of their normal movements and attitudes; their bodily movements may be incoherent, disorderly, muddled, awkward, ugly, wasteful, abandoned to a general condition of do-it-anyhow and go-as-you-please.' How lamentably true this is of most of us!

On the intellectual side, the aim of education is not the accumulation of knowledge, but the development of the right attitude of mind, the antithesis of the cast-iron type of mind beloved of the totalitarian dictator. The power of clear and balanced thinking should be our aim, the great gift of looking things straight in the face and seeing them as they are. Not to be led away by fallacies and sophistries, by catch-words and slogans, not to take things at their face-value, not to succumb to propaganda, not to be afraid to be led by reason, however unpalatable may be the conclusions to which we are led by reason, —this is infinitely more precious than all your scholarship and all your iron efficiency. Not that we despise knowledge, but, valuable as knowledge is, the mental attitude is even more important than mere knowledge.

Then, of course, there is the moral side. The development of the moral sense ought to be the supreme aim of education; but how is this to be achieved? We are told so often by well-meaning critics that the absence of religious instruction is a radical defect of our education; but this criticism seems to me to miss the mark. Formal religious or even moral instruction is more likely to breed just those evils of narrowness, intolerance, and hypocrisy, which it is intended to guard against. Where precept and practice do not go hand in hand, mischief is bound to be the result. The best guarantee of a sound moral development is to be found in an atmosphere of high moral idealism, in which one can instinctively develop one's passion for truth and justice, for service and sacrifice, as well as the qualities of self-reliance and self-control. I believe that great literature, properly studied, can more effectively help towards the moral and emotional development of the young than any number of sermons or any amount of moral instruction.

In the last resort, the educator's business is simply to train the pupil to educate himself. Self-education is the only lasting form of education. That is why it is so important to train the pupil to think for himself and to give him plenty of leisure in which he may freely engage in healthy creative activities, unhampered by excessive control from above. We do not seem as yet to have realized in any degree the supreme importance of this in education. The so-called extra-mural activities, which so many of us are pleased to tolerate as serving to swell the pages of an Annual Report, are at least as important, from the point of view of the pupil's all-round development, as the class-room work itself. Listen to what an English educationist has to say on this subject. " Pressing outwards from within is life................ Pressing downwards from outside is authority--not that authority which exists to enable youth, by the flexible limits it ordains, to find fuller and richer freedom ; but an authority whose policy of limitation is rigid, just because it is based on the fear of freedom. So, from the lack of legitimate and abundant outlet, this surging tide of life is driven back on itself. And the boy in his spare time alternates between periods of bored stagnation and periods of futile or destructive eruption. Evidence of this kind of fear is most easily recognizable in nervous habits, in the inability of so many boys to concentrate, in undue bumptiousness, in irresponsibility, in acute sexual disturbance." That is why creative leisure activities hold such a vital place in education.

I should be perfectly satisfied with an education which made an honest attempt at satisfying these requirements. But, taking these one after another, I cannot honestly say anything in defence of the system that we have to-day. It is by no means pleasant to have to say this; but truth compels me to speak out. I may be charged with ingratitude when I condemn as radically unsound the educational system of which I am a product. We are told that we have no right to blame a system which, with all its faults, has given us so many men eminent in the different walks of life. But, if we examine the matter a little closely, we shall find that this argument does not take us far. Take any one of the great men whose names these champions of our education throw at our heads, and you will find that he came to be what he was or is by dint of sheer self-education, and owed very little of his greatness to his school or college training. Our great men, I must repeat, became great rather *in spite of* our educational system than by virtue of it. There may be stray exceptions, but the general truth can hardly be gainsaid by anyone. I have no doubt that, trained in the sort of creative atmosphere I have tried to describe above, they would have been far greater in their powers and in their achievements. If I may be so presumptuous as to take my own humble instance, while I am duly grateful to my teachers for what they did for me, it is my firm conviction that I should have developed into something much better

and been capable of much greater things, if only I had been brouht up under a system which could enable me to discover my special aptitudes and foster them on proper lines under the guidance of men who took a sympathetic interest in me. I am quite sure every one of you will echo my feelings on this matter. Granted that our country has in modern times produced men and women who could hold their own in any country, how do you explain the indisputable fact that these bear such a small proportion to the total number of our educated men and women? When we take into account the vastness of our country, the number of these great men and women is so small as to be negligible. Besides, we have to judge a system of education, not by the exceptional men, but by its average product; and under this test our education obviously stands self-condemned. How many of our educated men and women are models of physical form, or mental balance, or moral poise? How many of them are self-reliant and independent in their outlook? How many of them take a living interest in the healthy activities of life? How many of them have a taste for literature or the arts? How many of them have any solid contribution to show in the field of culture? To ask these questions is to have the barrenness of our education strikingly brought home to us.

Perhaps the chief factor that has stood in the way of our educated men distinguishing themselves by creative literary work is the use of a foreign medium. I am a passionate admirer and lover of the English language; and I spare no pains to master its subtleties in order to be able to appreciate it all the better and use it with the greater expressiveness and force. I am deeply thankful that it has been given to me to learn this language, for without it I should have been cut off from the whole world of modern life and thought. For the same reason, I want as many as of our boys and girls as can to learn to read English books with ease, so that they may be abreast of the times. Those who know only their own language in our country are under a great handicap, seeing that the quantity of reading matter on modern subjects available in our languages is so meagre. No one who knows only his mother tongue can, therefore, claim to be fully educated under present conditions. In spite of all this, I hold that it is a positive disservice to compel our children to acquire all their knowledge through English. Knowledge so acquired is bound to be ill-digested, ill-assimilated knowledge, since clear, coherent thinking is impossible (for most of us, at any rate), through the medium of a foreign tongue. Systematic training in the use of the mother-tongue is the only means of developing the faculty of creative thinking. I am almost ashamed to labour the obvious, but many among us are not yet apparently ready to accept such commonplaces.

I hold very strongly the view that, at least in the first five years of the school course, the pupil should not be bothered with a second

language. These years should be devoted to a progressive and intensive training in the use of the mother-tongue. Composition in the mother-tongue should be used as the means of giving the best possible mental training to the pupils. It is amazing to find even teachers sometimes speaking as if composition must necessarily mean composition in English! The whole technique of clear, correct, forcible and elegant expression can be really mastered only through the medium of the mother-tongue.

Dr. Dover Wilson has given beautiful expression to the supreme value of a training in the use of the mother-tongue. He points out that, style being the ultimate morality of man, he who will improve his writing must begin by improving himself by disciplining his personality as well as enriching it. "He can enrich his personality", he goes on to say, "by studying the writings of those who have written supremely well, especially of the great poets and thinkers. He can discipline his personality by practising English (that is to say, his mother-tongue,) as an art or craft; an art, like other arts, involving concentration of thought, careful selection and a thorough mastery of material. Through such practice the efficiency of his mind will be increased. It will become lucid in its conceptions, more exact in its discriminations, richer in idea, readier in utterance, and finally more fastidious in its taste, until it comes to hate the half-thought which gives birth to smudgy image, illformed phrase, and slovenly sentence. A mind thus enriched and thus disciplined can know neither slavery nor corruption."

I hope no one will conclude, from what I have said on the need for concentration on the mother-tongue in the lower classes, that in my judgement training in the use of the mother-tongue may be given up in the higher classes. Far from holding this view, I would make composition in the mother-tongue obligatory on all pupils, at least to the end of the high school stage

In additon to the mother-tongue, I hold English should be taught as a compulsory second language, after atleast 5 years of the school course. The aim of English teaching should, for the majority of the pupils, be to enable them to read English books with facility and ready comprehension; training in English expression and in literary appreciation may be confined to the few who show a special aptitude for it. The study of English as literature must be differentiated from the study of English as a language. But, at every stage, accuracy and thoroughness should be insisted on as indispensable.

Our present system of education is often condemned as too linguistic and too literary. If what is meant is simply that it is not sufficiently practical, that there is too little of 'learning by doing,' I should, of course, readily agree; but I submit that our education is hardly

linguistic and hardly literary, in the proper sense of those terms. How many of our educated men have learnt to love any language and to use it efficiently, if not with a delicate appreciation of its subtler beauties? How many of them have acquired an appreciation for literature, if not the capacity for literary expression, in any language? As a matter of fact, our approach to language or to literature is radically faulty, and the poor results produced are out of all proportion to the amount of time and energy devoted to these subjects. Under improved methods of teaching, we ought to be able to show really tangible results; and we should also be able to find room in the curriculum for more languages, without any extra strain on the pupils.

Besides the mother-tongue and English, there is a third language for which I should find room at some stage of the secondary school course, and that is Hindi or Hindustani. I shall not go into the Hindi-Urdu controversy; for Hindi and Urdu are, at least in their basic elements, the same language, their only difference being in the matter of script. In the higher stages, Hindi becomes more and more Sanskritized, as Urdu becomes more and more Persianized; but that does not affect the basic elements of the language. It is because I believe in a common language for India, and because such a common language can be only Hindustani, that I want our boys and girls to acquire a working knowledge of Hindustani, with much greater stress on speaking ability than on reading or writing. Speaking from personal experience, I know that an adequate working knowledge of Hindustani can be easily acquired in some three years of the school course, without any undue strain on the pupil.

If I had my way, I should also very much like to make it obligatory on at least every Hindu boy and girl to learn just enough Sanskrit to be able to construe simple Sanskrit poetry of the kind we have in Valmiki Ramayana. I have never been able to understand how an Intermediate or B. A. student of Sanskrit should still be unable to read the simplest Sanskrit verses fluently or construe them without much effort. The only possible explanation is that the method of teaching is utterly defective and that the foundations of Sanskrit study are not properly laid at the very beginning. No one who is ignorant of Sanskrit and unable to read the texts in the original can claim to have imbibed the essence of Indian culture. A knowledge of Sanskrit is the key which alone can unlock the precious treasures of our culture.

Whatever the scheme itself, its success or failure will depend directly on the capacity and attitude of the teacher. The most admirable of schemes may be wrecked by a set of inefficient teachers, while even a radically faulty system can be made to yield fairly good results by a body of earnest and efficient teachers. The teacher, in short, is the pivot of the whole system.

I do not, of course, forget that the quality of the techer's work will to a large extent depend upon his status in society, his salary, and the conditions of his service, quite as much as on his capacity to teach. Even in advanced England the teaching profession is still looked down upon in many quarters; in our country, it is perhaps more despised than in any other. What a tregedy that the profession should have come to such a pass in a country where from time immemorial the teacher used to be an object of veneration! One shudders to think of the degraded condition of our elementary-school teacher. The secondary-school teacher's lot is often no better. This is how Mr. S. P. B. Mais describes, in his *Interlude*, the teachers of a school in England: "These men had eliminated every spark of ambition: they were all underpaid, and looked it: there was lacking any tenacity of purpose, any of that eager-eyed vigour which characterised those who were born to lead. And yet these men in their day had been scholars of their colleges,......full of promise: the school had sucked them dry." How infinitely more true all this is of teachers in our country! Neither the State nor the public are alive to the nobility of the teacher's task and the need to attract the very best men to the profession by means of good pay and prospects, and by conditions of service in which one can devote oneself single-mindedly to the discharge of one's duties. The teacher's work is so little encouraged or appreciated by the parents that one feels like echoing Bernard Shaw's gibe about the schools being a sort of prison invented if not by, then in the interests of, parents, whose main desire in connection with their troublesome brats is to be rid of them as much as possible. We can hardly repress our indignant scorn when we find gentlemen in prosperous circumstances holding forth to an audience of famished teachers on the sacredness of their calling and exhorting them to lead a life of plain living and high thinking. All this I am free to admit; but, all the same, I would ask you in all humility never to forget that we teachers are the true man-makers and nation-builders, and that, even under the most depressing conditions of service, we have to set a high example of idealism and self-denial. Let us by all means unceasingly agitate for better pay, for security of tenure, for improved conditions of service; but let us also compel admiration and respect by our competence and character, and by our unflinching devotion to the high task we have taken upon ourselves. For if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? If gold rust, what shall iron do?

It must be our tireless endeavour to equip ourselves in every possible way for the discharge of our duties. Tha teacher who has ceased to be a student has missed his vocation. There is no limit to the number of directions in which even the best teacher can still improve his equipment. How many of us make it a point to keep ourselves abreast of educational development in the outside world? How

many of us have even a general idea of the wonderful advance being made in other countries, especially in America, in the sphere of educational theory and practice? How many of us are believers in improved methods of teaching? How many of us are interested in the fascinating subject of child-psychology? How many of us honestly believe in studying the individual child, so as to suit our method to his or her special aptitudes and needs? How many of us believe in the child-mind developing in an atmosphere of freedom? In other words, how many of us have outgrown medieval ideas of discipline? How many of us are above adopting in our dealings with our pupils the attiude of 'I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my mouth let no dog bark'? How many of us are book-lovers and readers not to say book-buyers? How many of us have taken the trouble to cultivate a sense of humour, so as to see ourselves as others see us and so as not to imitate the egregious schoolmaster who offered to teach Charles Lamb the elements of composition? On the moral side, how many of us have the strength lightly to bear our joys and sorrows, and never to bend our knees before insolent might?

I am afraid we have not yet adequately realized the pressing need of organized co-operative effort for self-improvement in all directions. The agitation for better pay and prospects, for better conditions of service, for security of tenure, must go on; but it must be better organized and more steady and persistent. There is also another sort of work to which each Guild must set its hand in right earnest; and that is on the academic side. In my opinion, no Guild has a right to exist which is indifferent to this aspect of its work. While agitating for an improvement in the lot of teachers, each Guild must at the same time make it its primary business to work for the improvement of the teacher's equipment. Each Guild must become an educational laboratory, in which systematic investigation and research in educational problems are carried on from year's end to year's end. It is not even enough to study what America is doing in the fields of child-psychology, measurement of intelligence, new-type examinations, and so on. We have to carry on our own experiments and investigations with a view to adapting foreign methods and conclusions to our special conditions. Is there any Teachers' Association under our organization which has taken up this kind of fruitful study and research? Can we pretend that we are not free to undertake this kind of work on our own, even with all the existing handicaps? There is much truth in the old homely saying, 'Where there is a will, there is a way.'

Time and again have I felt a sense of frustration at the failure of my efforts to rouse my own pupils to an intelligent interest in their work; and often have I used harsh words about them. But I know that our students are by no means inferior, either intellectually or morally, to students in other countries; and if they seem to be

indifferent and dull, wayward and restive, let us not forget that the blame is mainly ours. The system of education has, of course, to share the blame with us ; but we cannot get away from the plain fact that we have failed to give our pupils the measure of sympathy and understanding without which young minds must languish and wither. The modern student, we are told, is not amenable to discipline. I am afraid I cannot subscribe to this view. Wherever the teacher is imaginative enough to put himself in the position of the student and sympathetic enough to understand his aspirations and give him the freedom to enable his emotions to find a natural outlet in legitimate extra-academic activities, the student will show himself exemplary in his behaviour. But trouble is bound to arise when, with crude and outworn notions of discipline, we seek to repress the student's natural energies and aspirations. Deaf ourselves to the roar of the surging tide of national consciousness, we tell our young men not to listen to it themselves; is it any wonder that they chafe and rebel against such repression? I do not for a moment justify the resort by students to the extreme weapon of a strike on the flimsiest pretexts; what I feel is that most of our students' strikes could be averted if only our teachers would display more sympathy and imagination in their dealings with their pupils. In any case, we teachers must learn to harmonise the claims of discipline and of freedom, and to appeal to the noblest instincts and impulses of our pupils. When all is said and done, it is we teachers who hold the key to the future.

The Rishi Valley Conference

By S. T. RAMANUJA IYENGAR

IT was indeed a very happy idea of the Executive of the Chittoor District Teachers' Guild to have fixed up Rishi Valley as the venue of the recent Provincial Educational Conference. After Mahanandi in 1926, the Rishi Valley Conference is the next to be held in a rural spot, located amidst the spurs of the Eastern Ghats, a place at once beautiful and healthful. No wonder Rishi Valley did call.

The conference was unique in this that it broke all conventions associated with previous conferences. The environment and the School Rishi Valley told unconsciously even upon a body of conservative teachers, supposed to swim in the backwaters of national life. The School itself was in the midst of its vacation but the spirit of the school was visible in the community of true Sevakas represented by the masters and pupils led by a true captain of Education, the head of the Gurukula. That spirit was catchy. The delegates responded wholeheartedly and had their education. Creed, caste, conventions were all forgotten and the whole body from outside merged themselves in the process of living associated with Rishi Valley. Such spontaneous transformation was visible in every aspect of conference life—the Presidential procession, the meetings at the banyan tree and the intercourse among delegates. As the Hindu Correspondent in charge of conference reporting put it, the conference of Educationists was reminiscent of a National Congress Session, in true national setting. It appeared that teachers had suddenly swum into the currents of national life.

The opening session was again unique in the annals of the S. I. T. U. conferences. For the first time in 32 years, teachers marched three deep from the School to the meeting place to the accompaniment of band and the singing of Jana Gana Mana. For the first time, teachers squatted on mother Earth in true Indian style. The sylvan setting of the meeting was rendered exquisite by the songs of the Rishi Valley girls. The atmosphere made even Professor Rama Aiyar, the President, regain his voice just to deliver his address.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee called attention, in his address, to the wide spread dissatisfaction about educational systems all over the world and the need for their revision. Prof. B. Sanjiva Rao, mellowed Educationist that he is, pleaded for the illumination of the spirit and creative activity. President Rama Aiyar, linguist and scholar, the Gandhi of the teaching profession, delivered an all round attack on Government, the Teacher, and Teachers' Organisations and

pleaded for a new orientation of Education on root and branch lines and rightly fixed the responsibility for it on the Teacher. Sri G. V. Subba Rao's chat with the delegates about the School Rishi Valley left the average delegate puzzled and perplexed but he impressed every one as a born leader, determined to break the barrier and evolve a community life based on social and economic equality with service to humanity as its motto. His experiment at Rishi Valley is a revolt and it is a reminder of the futility of the standardised schooling called Education in our province.

The entertainments organised by him, the volunteer service rendered, and the organisation displayed in what is an inaccessible place are all pointers to our schools to do likewise to hasten the freedom of Ind. The symposia on the Mother-tongue, Service Conditions and Mass Education revealed a depth and width of thought, showing that teachers are determined to exercise freedom of thought and speech. The resolutions rightly were few in number and they reiterated the demands of the S. I. T. U. made from time to time. The key resolution of the Conference was the one relating to the suspension of the Constitution in the province and the resulting uncertainty in the matter of Educational reform. That the teaching profession too should feel grave concern for the existing state of things is a proof that freedom cannot be deferred for long. The resolution is one more proof that this conference has made teachers live up with national trends.

It would be an omission if reference were not made to the outstanding personalities among the Reception Committee who in addition to the President and Secretaries of the Guild and other workers, contributed to make the Conference a success. Prof. E. N. Subrahmanyam, the Publicity Officer of the Conference, has become an indispensable stage manager of every conference with his experience in running the conferences at Palghat, at Ambai and now at Rishi Valley. He is a reveller in poses, ceremonials and artistry and brings to bear on his work attention to the minutest details. Prof. S. Srinivasan has been and is the main S. I. T. U. pillar in Chittoor district, a great and good organiser. They are dear to Andhra as naturalised citizens of Andhra desa even as they are dear to Kerala and Tamil Nad. May the S. I. T. U. flag raised by them be kept aloft with vision and faith!

Sri Aurobindo and the New Age*

By S. VISWANATHAN, B. A.

EVERYBODY knows that we are in a crisis. It is constantly dinned into our ears that a new age is dawning on us. But in spite of all the blatant propaganda broadcast from all sides, what the new world will be like is quite a question. Some see in the present conflict a struggle between democratic civilization and barbarism. Some see in it the last decisive fight between capitalism and socialism and await the dawn of a classless society, in which equality will reign, everyman will have work and no one will starve. To others, the present conflagration has thrown into relief the vexed question of reconciling individual freedom and collective responsibility—a question which has baffled political scientists for a long time and has produced all the numerous theories from extreme totalitarianism to philosophical anarchism. Lord Halifax is fighting a crusade for Christianity. Thus different thinkers read different meanings into the present situation, and draw different, but all rosy, pictures of the future.

Even ignoring for the present the impossibility of one distraught world taking all these different shapes, the thinking mind is still left with that most important question: "Whither is this cosmic procession bound?" It has been given to Sri Aurobindo to give the answer by gathering up all the partial views into a happy and unique synthesis.

Those who make occasional excursions into the world of Sri Aurobindo's thought are often baffled by its complexity. The landscape, to all appearances, is familiar but there is something that throws a veil of strangeness over it and blurs the lines. Mr. Anilbaran Roy's slender volume may well be called a guide to Aurobindoland. It presents in lucid and elegant language the unique contribution that Sri Aurobindo has made to the thought of the New Age. When we take our stand on the central teachings of Sri Aurobindo, the lines of the landscape gather definition, the veil is lifted.

Having set down these general statements about the work, one is at a loss to know how to set about the work of indicating the main thoughts embodied in it. Summarising a summary is not easy work, particularly when the original summary is one like Sri Anilbaran's—lucid, simple and straight without verbiage. We shall, therefore, try only to mention the most important facts around which the others

* *Sri Aurobindo and the New Age* By Sri Anilbaran Roy. Published by John M. Watkins, 21, Cecil Court, Charring Cross Road, London. Also available at Sri Aurobindo Library, Sembudoss Street, Madras.

revolve, if only to remind ourselves of the eternal verities of Sri Aurobindo's thoughts.

The fundamental principle of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy may be stated in his own language: "Spirit being the fundamental truth of existence, life can be only its manifestation. Spirit must be not only the origin of life but its basis, its pervading reality, and its highest and total result. But the forms of life as they appear to us are at once its disguises and its instruments of self-manifestation. Man has to grow in knowledge till they cease to be disguises and grow in spiritual power and quality till they become in him its perfect instruments. To grow into the fulness of the divine is the true law of human life, and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution."

Because of frequent Armaggeddons or rather in spite of them, the idea of a World State is uppermost in men's minds. All the physical obstacles to such a union have been removed and the world has become what President Wilson called a vast whispering gallery. But the psychological oneness which only can be a sure guarantee of permanent unity is yet to arrive. The little self who follows you as your way to your tryst is having it all his way. Until he is supressed, no unity achieved by political and administrative means, will be real. The religion of humanity which is at present the highest active ideal of man-kind, must spiritualise itself and become the general inner law of human life. "A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one; that humanity is its present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here."

Chapter II, "Sri Aurobindo and the Future of Mankind" is, perhaps, the best chapter in the book. It contains a clear and lucid account of what Sri Aurobindo means by Intuition and Evolution. While Bergson regarded Intuition as the highest source of knowledge; to Sri Aurobindo it is "the secondary action of the supramental power in the lower hemisphere of mind, life and body." To perfect humanity, we must go beyond Reason and Intuition to their source in the supermind, and the practical process by which this is achieved is integral Yoga. "Evolution means always a progressive development of that which is in seed and a manifestation of that which is phenomenally hidden." "The goal of terrestrial evolution is a spiritual divine life on earth." "The material world has evolved life in obedience to a pressure from the mental plane. It is now trying to evolve supermind in obedience to a pressure from the supramental plane." The world today is in travail for that new birth. The latest discoveries of science lend support to this view.

"Modern Science and Spirituality" is a very edifying chapter in which we are shown the limitations of science and how spirituality takes up the threads where science leaves them and weaves them into a perfect synthesis. "The Divine Mother," "Sri Aurobindo and Modern English Poetry" (which was published in the Scholar Annual 1939), "Bases of Yoga" are the other chapters in this thought provoking volume. The last chapter "The Life Divine," contains extracts from Sri Aurobindo's latest and epoch-making book of the same title

The question we posed in the beginning has been answered by Sri Aurobindo. He has seen by Yogic vision the deeper significance of the present crisis and has given a new depth and range to our ideal of human unity. Without such a divine and high purpose, the present turmoil should seem ridiculously pointless and shallow. Evolution is no longer a blind thrust; we have to move consciously towards the goal. We have to set about redressing the anomalies of the present in the light of the new evolution. And of all the distressing anomalies, the stress at present is on the economic aspect of the struggle—and not without reasons. The menace of the machine makes life for the masses perpetual drudgery. The true definition of labour saving, wrote Robert Lynd, is leisure giving. Leisure indeed! To the masses, the vaunted democracy of staksmen is a mockery. Too long have we submitted to the capitalist order of exploitation and too long have we allowed a few men at the top to set the pattern of society.

What is life, if with care
We have no time to stand and stare,

wrote an English poet and in these lines uttered the most poignant cry of our Age. That is the most important and disturbing problem of our Age. In spite of the thousands of labour saving machines that human ingenuity has devised, we have no time to stand and stare—stare not at the rough and tumble on the surface of life but at the depths that mirror the blue expanse of the Infinite. The joy of life has to be restored to the masses. They are engaged in the interminable take of filling a bottomless pit. They have to be emancipated from the thraldom of the capitalist order of society which thrives by strengthening the frontiers of the ego.

Striving for this consummation, we shall be getting ready for the final transformation of human nature which Sri Aurobindo heralds. From the mountain summit of his thought and spiritual experience, he hears strange whisperings of a new land and glimpses the breaking of the Dawn. He beckons to us to rise from the plains and cast of the fetters that bind us. The fetters shall not bind us. "Man was born not to drag the chains but to spread his wings". Let no one speak of

"these degenerate days" and keep away from the festival of life. By individual effort, we can hasten the new birth and ascend to the glorious consummation. With new vision and significance, we shall utter the Upanishadic cry ,' Asatoma Satgamaya, Thamasoma Jyotirgamaya, Mrityorma Amritam Gamaya" (Lead me from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to light, from Death to Immortality)" and march on. The call of the Murali echoes down the ages; we shall hearken to it.

Fine Fire

The old ways
Wrought anew
By rare fine fire,
Calling in tongues of flame,
The resplendent spear,
That guides and guards us
Leading ever on,
Through swift activity
Towards that Zone,
That gives and takes
All power and purifies
Our thought, and draws from thought
Within the skies.

—*Barnett D. Conlan.*

Reviews & Notices

Rajaji's 1920 Jail Life. Published by Messrs. Rochouse & Sons, Ltd., Esplanade, Madras.

This highly entertaining book gives the day to day life of Mr. C. Rajagopalachari during his three months' imprisonment in 1920. It gives the reader the best idea he could hope to have of jail life in our country without his experiencing it himself. Not being intended for publication when it was first written, it contains a minuteness of detail and a certain listlessness of expression which is captivating. And the jail life it depicts is one of which no civilised Government has any reason to be proud. It is true that what is described herein was the position 20 years ago. But we know we have not made much progress since. Every Indian ought to read this book, which will enable him to know what our leaders have suffered for us and to realise the enormous task that awaits creators of a New India. Every Englishman ought to read this book too, in order to realise what his countrymen are doing in India in the name of law and order.

The book also gives a revealing picture of Mr. Rajagopalachari. Shorn of all thought of etiquette or propriety, all alone in his solitary cell, with only the mosquitoes and bugs to keep him company, face to face with his conscience and his Maker, the prisoner unfolds his mind with engaging candour. His pining for love; his reactions to the rigours and pettinesses of jail discipline, and to the different dispositions of other prisoners; the readiness to suffer all the rigours of his lot with the true satyagrahi's smiling face and loving heart and with the sporting thought that it is all in the game; and, above all, the consuming patriotism and love of liberty that makes him determined to stand it all and still fight—these are an unexpected treat for the reader. It is true we are now slaves. But it is also true that among us are some who are cast in the epic mould. It is good to read their thoughts, because it enables us to know that we are not absolutely lost. And this book, containing the innermost thoughts of a giant brain, is bracing in its effects—a tonic against dependency. —S. V.

The Dictionary of Proverbs and Maxims. Anglo-Urudu, by Abdulla Yakub Khan. Publisher: Ram Narain Lal, Allahabad. Price Rs. 1—4—0.

Whatever the importance attached to proverbs in world literature, the task of collecting these scattered gems and codifying them in the form of a dictionary is any day a useful thing to do.

The work under review has been produced with the help of more than twenty works, English and Urdu, on proverbs. The author has fairly succeeded in collecting, and also composing, Urdu proverbs and maxims corresponding to English ones. Proverbs of the same idea, scattered through the work, are indicated by the system of cross-reference. It cannot be said that this collection is complete or perfect. But it has decidedly filled the gap created by the absence of books of this kind.

The errata, more than six pages in length, bears witness to the vast number of printing mistakes. It is to be hoped that the next edition will remove the necessity for the Errata and the Addenda.

An edition of the work in Nagari characters will be very useful. It will greatly enlarge the field of its circulation.

A Simple Course of English Grammar and Composition. Second Edition by H. Martin. Published by Messrs. K. & J. Cooper, Educational Publishers, Bombay. Price Rs. 2.

This closely-packed volume amply justifies its name. It contains a lucid exposition of the principles of grammar taught in our High Schools. There are the usual explanations and examples and exercises. The chapters on sentences, analysis and synthesis, idioms etc. are particularly good and exhaustive.

But where the book distinguishes itself is in the Composition section. Writing stories from outlines, completing partly told stories, writing short stories from incomplete outlines, writing stories in different persons, reproduction of stories from poems, writing stories from pictures, writing of imaginary autobiographies, letter-writing of all kinds, dialogue writing, paragraph writing, essay writing, precis writing--all these are dealt with admirably, with copious instructions, illustrations, and exercises. The volume will be of immense use not only to High School pupils but even College Students.

The book is splendidly printed and got up.

New Study Seat and Desk Work—Primer and Books I to V by H. Martin. Published by Messrs. K. & J. Cooper, Educational Publishers, Bombay. Price As. 4, 5, 7, 7, 7, 7.

This series teaches the portion of grammar taught in our I, II and III Forms. Teaching of grammar at this stage is mostly working out exercises. The series is well prepared for the work. There are easy explanations and then follow copious exercises, illustrations also being given. The "Directions" will be of more use to teachers than to the pupils. In fact, the whole series will be quite a helpful guide to teachers of grammar.

The Viswavani, Edited by Viswambharanath, South Malaka, Allahabad. Annual Subscription Rs. 6.

We have before us the April issue of this newly started Hindi magazine. It contains a rich crop of learned contributions. Acharya Kshiti Mohan Sen writing on 'Common prayer' points out how Kabir, Dadu and other devotees found a meeting ground of the Hindu and the Mussulman. Rashtrapathi Moulana Abdul Kalam's article on the teaching of the Quran explains how tolerant Islam is and how it recognises the truth and oneness of all religions. These two articles are now of topical interest, when, alas! misguided persons of both communities are breaking the heads of each other in the sacred name of religion. Social life in China and Dramatic Art in ancient India form the subject of two very instructive articles among others. Short stories, beautiful verses (notably those on Sevagram Asram in this issue), and notes on current topics are also some of the attractive features of this excellent periodical. Numerous photographs and pictures adorn this issue. We wish our contemporary a career of great usefulness.

Saraswati, Edited by Natuvil Matom Sankaranarayana Ayyar, Saraswati Printing House, Trichur.

We acknowledge receipt of the first issue of this Malayalam magazine which contains among others good prose articles from the pen of Mahakavi Ullur, Sri K. V. M. and Sri Narayana Bhattathiri. The Editor writes a short story and Sri P. Kunhiraman Nair and Srimati Kunhilakshmy Amma give each a short poetic piece. We welcome this new venture and wish it success.

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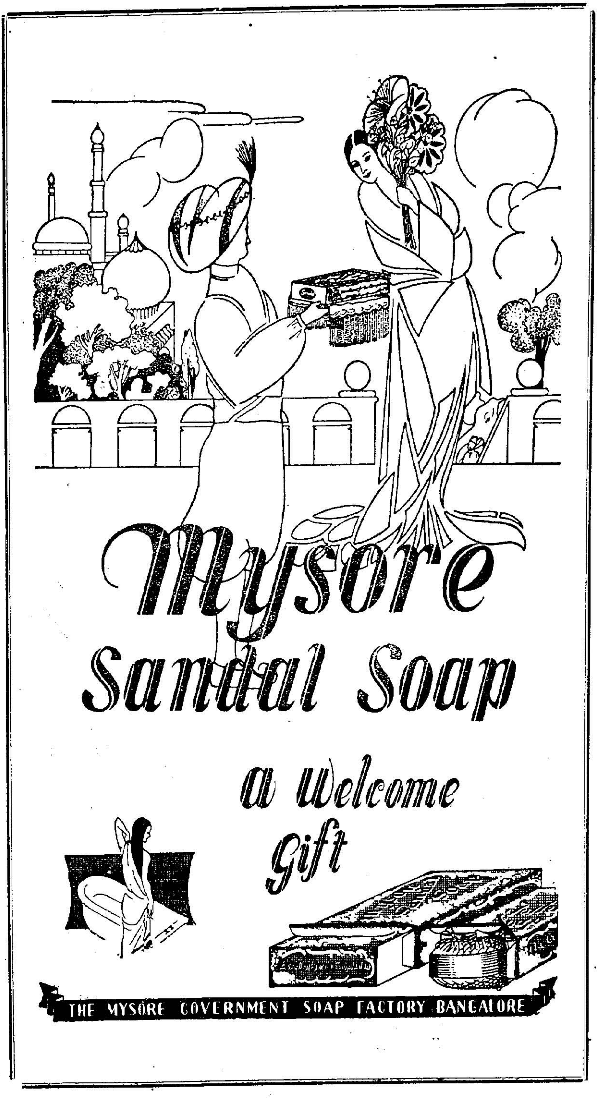
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